

## **Letter re: Appointment of Project Connect's ATP Board**

Dear Colleagues,

We appreciate the trust you have placed in us, the members of the Nominating Committee established by the interlocal agreement between Capital Metro and the City of Austin, to recommend the initial Community Expert members of the Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) Local Government Corporation Board of Directors. This ATP Board is charged with the implementation of Project Connect.

We are pleased today to recommend a phenomenally qualified slate of candidates for these Community Expert positions – Dr. Collette Burnette, Veronica Castro de Barrera, and Tony Elkins. We are confident each will contribute considerable expertise, experience, and commitment to listening and engaging the community in this transformational initiative for our city.

At this time, the Nominating Committee also is proposing the City Council and Capital Metro Board of Directors formally recommend by resolution that the ATP Board of Directors engage additional applicants on advisory committees and/or in another manner and capacity that the ATP Board determines to contribute their expertise to delivering Project Connect.

The Nominating Committee received thirty-six applications from passionate and qualified members of this community who are eager to serve in the implementation of Project Connect. All applicants had great skills to offer Project Connect. Over the course of the last two weeks, the Nominating Committee has had the privilege of speaking with fifteen of these applicants about their experience and what unique insight and perspective they could bring to the ATP Board. We were blown away by their commitment to the success of Project Connect and the depth and breadth of their interest and experience.

When the ATP Board was envisioned prior to the election, the City Council and Capital Metro Board made a commitment to the community through an interlocal agreement that defined the structure and roles and responsibilities of the ATP Board. While the Nominating Committee identified many individuals that would be invaluable leaders on the ATP Board, recommending a change to the size and make-up of the ATP Board at this time is not appropriate.

However, the Nominating Committee believes it would be a great loss to the community, and the ATP Board and Project Connect, if we did not engage these experts in the future implementation of Project Connect on engineering, construction, finance, community planning and sustainability related issues. Therefore, we recommend that the ATP Board identify formal ways for these individuals to contribute their expertise through appointment to technical committees or workgroups formed by the ATP Board, as technical advisors, or other appropriate ways they can contribute to Project Connect as determined by the ATP Board.

Members of the Nominating Committee have reached out to the following individuals to confirm their interest in contributing their expertise, experience and commitment to the implementation of Project Connect. Each expressed their continued commitment to its success and their willingness to assist us in this transformational program. We thank them for their commitment to helping make Project Connect a success.

Art Alfaro  
Karen Bondy  
Samuel Franco  
Patrick Howard

Frank Kitteridge  
Cindy Matula  
Heidi Ross

We were impressed with the depth and breadth of the experience, expertise, and commitment to the community of all the 36 applicants in this process. We thank them all for their interest and will share their names with the ATP Board, for consideration as the Board develops its engagement processes. Attached below are bios for all of the individuals referenced above.

Best Regards

Ann Kitchen, Chair  
COA Mobility Committee

Jeff Travillion, Chair  
CapMetro Operations, Planning & Safety Committee

Alison Alter, Chair  
COA Audit and Finance Committee

Terry Mitchell, Chair  
CapMetro Finance, Audit & Administration Committee

## **Colette Pierce Burnette**

Dr. Burnette, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, joined Huston-Tillotson University as president on July 1, 2015. She is the first female president of the combined institutions of Huston and Tillotson Colleges. She served as interim President at Pierce College in Puyallup, Washington, the Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer, Executive Assistant to the President, Vice President for Information Technology and Services and Chief Information Officer at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, Dean of Information Technology at Pierce College in Lakewood, Washington, and Manager of Consulting and Project Management Services at the Washington State Department of Transportation in Olympia, Washington. Colette has combined her IQ, EQ, entrepreneurial spirit and technical knowledge to forge successful careers in engineering, information technology and higher education. Before transitioning into higher education, Dr. Burnette worked as a Computer Analyst at The Washington Post, an Operations Support Engineer at Proctor and Gamble, Director of Information Systems at Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., and ran her own computer consulting firm, CompuMent. Dr. Burnette is a strong proponent of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and civic and community engagement. She is laser focused on finding resources to support a student-centered university. Dr. Burnette's commitment to being a servant leader are evident in her leadership positions in the Austin community as co-chair of the Mayor of Austin's Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities, Board Chair of Leadership Austin, and Treasurer of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas. She serves on numerous boards and committees including the Greater Austin Area Black Chamber, National Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities of the United Methodist Church, Austin Community Foundation, IDEA Schools, Frontier Bank, Greater Austin Urban League, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas Advisory Council, Urban Roots Advisory Council, and Waterloo Greenway Board.

Her many honors include the Ohio State University Outstanding Engineering Alumnus Award, Anti-Defamation League Community Hero Award, Urban Land Institute Visionary Award, Mosaic Award, Austin Women's Hall of Fame, Girls Empowerment Network Igniting Power in Girls Award, named one of the Ten Most Influential Women in Austin, Administrator of the Year (awarded by the Student Government Association), Distinguished Woman of the Year Award, Diverse Issues in Higher Education's Top 25 Women in Higher Education, US Army Distinguished Civilian Volunteer Service Medal Award, Thurgood Marshall Foundation Chief Information Officer of the Year Award, Thurgood Marshall Chief Fiscal Officer of the Year Award, Dayton Business Journal Chief Fiscal Officer Awardee, and the National Diversity Council Glass Ceiling Award to name a few. Dr. Burnette, a highly sought after speaker in Central Texas, is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and The Links, Inc. Colette received her high school diploma in Cleveland, Ohio from John F. Kennedy High School, a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from The Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Administration from Georgia College. She is a graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Management Development Program and received her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from University of Pennsylvania. Colette is married to retired Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Daarel Burnette and they have two adult children (Daarel II of Washington, DC and Daana of Los Angeles, CA).

## **Veronica Castro de Barrera**

Veronica Castro de Barrera is the founding principal of VCdB Architecture & Art, a design consulting practice in Austin, Texas. She is a licensed architect who has dedicated her career designing and managing public investments towards more walkable, inclusive urban design & transit-friendly communities. In her 23-year career she has designed a diverse portfolio of civic projects including housing, recreational, and mass transit. The majority of her work has been focused on the architecture of mobility in an effort to humanize the built environment connecting the most vulnerable in our communities to opportunities. She has studied in Mexico, United States, Italy and most recently a masterclass in Denmark with Gehl Architects. Veronica has led the transit studio for a national design-build firm and worked alongside teams of engineers and artists in the successful design, documentation and construction administration of transit programs and active mobility investments for Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth, and St. Louis, Missouri. She has called Austin home for the past two decades where she has raised her two children Andrea and Sebastian along with her husband Martin.

## **Tony Elkins**

Tony Elkins is an accomplished transportation and alternative financing professional with over 35 years of experience. He is skilled in the procurement of multi-billion transportation projects, public-private partnerships, business strategy, project finance and advising CEO's and Boards. He started work with BBGI Global Infrastructure S.A. in January 2021 helping to manage their portfolio of North American infrastructure assets and new business development. His long career in infrastructure includes employment with firms such as WSP and Cintra, working on high profile projects such as the Texas High Speed Rail, LA Metro's Sepulveda Transit Corridor and Maryland's I-495 and I-270 Congestion Relief Public Private Partnership program. Tony also spent over eight years working for Lend Lease structuring \$6 billion of affordable housing projects for the U.S. military under their MHPI public-private partnership program.

Tony holds an MBA in Finance and International Business from New York University and a BBA in Accounting with honors from the University of Massachusetts. He is a Board Member and Treasurer of the nonprofit Williams Community School in Austin, TX for children with neuro diverse educational needs.

## **Art Alfaro**

Art Alfaro is the Executive Director for Texas Association of Public Employee Retirement Systems (TEXPERS). Prior to joining TEXPERS Art was the City Treasurer for the City of Austin where he oversaw the management of the City's \$3.3 billion investment portfolio and the City's \$5.5 billion debt management program.

During his 32-year career with the City of Austin, Art served as a pension trustee for over 17 years. At times serving as the Chairman of the Investment Committee for the \$850 million Police Retirement System. Art was also a board member on the \$2.2 billion Austin Employees Retirement System and the \$950 million Firefighter's Retirement System. In addition to being a former trustee on all three of the City's pension boards, Art was also an active board member of the following entities: Austin Convention Center Enterprises, Austin Convention-Condominium Association, Austin-Bergstrom Landhost Enterprises, Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas, TexasTERM Advisory Board, Public Trust Advisors-Texas CLASS Investment Advisory Board and Travis County Investment Committee.

## **Karen Bondy**

Karen Bondy is a registered professional Civil Engineer with over 35 years of experience. Currently the General Manager of Brushy Creek Regional Utility Authority (BCRUA), which provides water to Round Rock, Cedar Park and Leander, her responsibilities include leading development of a new deep water intake project in Lake Travis. Previously she was Senior Vice President at the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), leading design and construction of new water supplies for Central Texas. Prior to that she was a water resources engineer at a water and wastewater engineering consulting firm specializing in utility planning, design, and construction management.

## **Samuel Franco**

Samuel Franco is a motivated infrastructure professional with extensive experience in public-private partnerships, cost/schedule, and risk analysis, as well as project management and project finance. He holds both a master's and bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas at El Paso and has worked for well over a decade in both the public and private sectors helping to implement infrastructure solutions across many asset classes including transportation, water/wastewater, and buildings. Mr. Franco serves on several boards and commissions for the City of Austin, where he helps draft and implement policies that affect the day-to-day lives of city residents. He is on the board of various non-profit organizations that also help shape the future growth and livability of Austin and Central Texas. His policy interest areas are infrastructure, technology, healthcare, worker's rights, affordable housing, and ending homelessness. He currently owns and operates a small infrastructure consulting firm, Infravest Strategies LLC, which holds Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) status in Texas. His firm specializes in assisting the public and private sectors analyze and implement infrastructure solutions utilizing both alternative delivery and alternative financing methods that benefit all. Born and raised in El Paso, Texas, Samuel has lived in Southeast Austin for many years and enjoys running, two-stepping, and rubbing his dog's belly.

## **Patrick B. Howard**

Patrick B. Howard, AICP, a native of the South Carolina Lowcountry, is a seasoned professional urban planner, affordable housing leader, and community builder with more than 25 years of experience in housing, community development, and planning and neighborhood revitalization. Patrick is currently responsible for providing management oversight and leadership for a public housing agency (PHA) and a housing finance corporation (HFC) with a combined staff of 22 full-time part-time, and temporary personnel.

In addition to his day to day management of two organizations, Patrick is currently serving as a Commissioner on the City of Austin Planning Commission – the fourth and fastest growing city in the State of Texas. This is a pivotal time in the city’s history and an exciting time to serve in this capacity as the city embarks on several different planning issues with potentially significant impact on the city’s future growth and development. This would include the adoption and/or implementation of: *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*, *Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint*, *Affordability Unlocked Initiative*, *Austin Strategic Mobility Plan*, amongst a myriad of other planning-related initiatives.

A retired US Army Reserves Lieutenant Colonel – a military career spanning 28 years, a two overseas deployments, Patrick has also earned numerous professional certifications over the course of his professional career, to include: American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP); Certified Public Manager (CPM); Certified Management Executive (CME); National Affordable Housing Professional-Executive (NAHPe); Housing Credit Certified Professional (HCCP); and Specialist in Housing Credit Management (SHCM).

## **Frank D. Kittredge, Jr., MBA, FACHE**

As the Director of HKS Advisory Services, a division within HKS Architects, Frank Kittredge is responsible for building an integrated business consulting practice as part of HKS’s global architectural design practice. A strategic thinker, Frank has devoted his 40 plus year career to helping organizations navigate today’s complex healthcare culture and maximize the value of their facility assets. He is a skilled communicator, including significant experience working with healthcare leaders and boards of directors, as well as public speaking and writing. Frank holds a Master of Business Administration from Boston University; a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Virginia; and he is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Frank and his family have lived in Austin since 1999.

## **Cindy M. Matula**

Cindy M. Matula is a Managing Director at JPMorgan Chase and runs the Middle Market business in Central Texas. A native of Hallettsville, Texas, she is a 1983 graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics-Fashion Design. She earned a Master of Business Administration degree from UT-Austin in December 1987.

Ms. Matula is active in various community and civic affairs. She was a 1997- 2006 member of the Board of Directors of the Austin Theatre Alliance and The Long Center from 2007-2016; currently serving on The Long Center Advisory Council. Before becoming a member of the United Way Capital Area Board of Directors in 2002 through April 2006, she served on the President's Cabinet for the 2001 United Way Campaign. Cindy served on the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors from 2005-2008 and in 2018 joined the Greater Austin Economic Development Corporation Board where she currently serves as Treasurer and is a member of The Chamber's Finance Committee. She has served on the Department Visiting Committee for The Department of Human Ecology and the Texas Exes Investment Committee, both at The University of Texas. Ms. Matula served on the Board of Trustees for St. Michael's Catholic Academy and chaired the Audit Committee from 2014-2017. Other memberships include: Austin Area Research Organization (AARO), Austin YPO Gold, and National Charity League – Austin Chapter. She is also an active member of St. Austin's Catholic Parish. Awards include 1999 Austin Business Journal Profile in Power and Distinguished Alumna of the year 2003 Texas Exes in Human Ecology. Cindy and her husband, Fernando Sotelo, have been married thirty-four years and have two daughters, Isabella (age 24) and Adriana (age 21).

## **Heidi Ross**

Ms. Ross holds a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering from UT Austin and has 28 years of professional experience in academia and the private sector. She is currently the Assistant Director for the Network Modeling Center at the UT Center for Transportation Research (CTR), where she works to implement research to real-world applications, with the goal of using data and analytics to better understand and improve the transportation system.

Prior to eight years with CTR, Ms. Ross developed deep and varied engineering experience in a traffic engineering consulting career. She has significant experience in microsimulation modeling, intersection and corridor analysis, origin destination studies, traffic operations evaluations, traffic signal design, transit pre-emption, traffic signal timing and coordination, traffic signal warrant studies, and a variety of other engineering and planning-related projects.

In addition to engineering expertise, Ms. Ross was the majority owner of a local WBE firm, WHM Transportation Engineering, and in that role was responsible for workforce planning, management, budgeting and financial performance, in addition to continued project work and supervision of a staff of 30. After selling the engineering firm to a national firm, she held the title of Vice President, Traffic Group Leader for the Central Texas Region, and Transportation Marketing Manager for the Central Texas Region. She has worked with and developed relationships with many regional agencies including the City of Austin, Williamson County, Travis County, the City of Round Rock, Capital Metro, TxDOT, CAMPO and CTRMA.